



June 2008 Newsletter

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IAA to release Iowa's Blueprint for Afterschool in mid-July

Full Title: *Iowa's Blueprint for Afterschool: Five Strategies for Ensuring Access to Affordable High-Quality Afterschool in Iowa for Children and Youth Ages 5-17*

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance plans to release the long-awaited *Blueprint for Afterschool* in mid-July. The IAA is in the process of planning two media events around the *Blueprint* and will send out further details to IAA members by the end of June. Keep your eyes on your inboxes!

Excerpted from the publication:

Iowa's Blueprint for Afterschool is intended to start conversations, raise awareness and provide a plan for next steps for afterschool around the state. This will require individuals, communities, and policy leaders to work together to overcome barriers in providing accessible, high-quality opportunities for children and youth when they are not in school.

Four Community Blueprint Forums were held around the state in the communities of Iowa City, Council Bluffs, Fort Dodge, and Des Moines to gather stakeholder input on matters affecting afterschool in our state. For additional information on these forums, or for a copy of the Blueprint Forums Report, please contact Michelle Rich at 515-243-2000 or mrich@sppg.com. The information gathered in these forums directly informed the writing of Iowa's Blueprint for Afterschool.

Monthly Guest Column from the Statewide Afterschool Networks Meeting Team

In late January of 2008, Iowa, along with the 37 other Statewide Afterschool Networks funded by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, were invited to send teams of seven to the Statewide Afterschool Networks Meeting in Tucson, Arizona. Attendees learned the latest about afterschool policy and practice from guest speakers from around the nation. In the

The Iowa Afterschool Alliance (IAA) Newsletter is a monthly venue of information and updates on afterschool programs and policies. For more information, please contact Brooke Findley at bfindley@sppg.com or 515-243-2000.

following months, each of the seven team members will take an opportunity to highlight parts of the meeting that they felt most helpful to their own work here in Iowa.

Jeff Anderson, Bureau Chief, Child Care and Community Services, Department of Human Services

I had the opportunity to attend the National Afterschool Networking meeting with colleagues from Iowa this past Spring. It was a great opportunity for me as the representative from the Department of Human Services to observe the energy and excitement of folks from Iowa and across the nation involved at the policy and service delivery level for after school programs.

One of the key messages I came away with was the need to link research, regulations and program standards to achieve positive outcomes for children and youth served in the variety of after school settings.

The Department of Human Services is responsible for child care regulation and the child care assistance program, often referred to as child care subsidy for low income families. The Department is the licensing agent for child care centers. Center based care is provided in not-for-profit and for-profit child care centers, churches, schools and community organizations. Licensing standards set the basic health and safety standards, including the child-to-staff ratio.

The child care assistance program, is available to families who need child care for children under age 13, to be employed or go to school and whose income is at or below 145% of the poverty level. Providers who are not home-based providers, must meet licensing standards, or are exempt as an accredited school-based program, to receive financial assistance for serving these children. In fiscal year 2007, 36% or nearly 7,000 of the children who were supported with assistance were school-age children and youth, were served each month with a \$21 million investment in federal and state funds.

In many states, including Iowa, community-based after school programs not associated with a school or a child care business, do not meet the licensing standards to qualify for state or federal programs, including child care assistance funding to support low income students. One of the key factors for not qualifying is the student-staff ratio, but staff qualifications, health and safety standards and physical plant issues may also contribute. States are having conversations internally and with each other about how to expand school-age subsidy care, while not diminishing the quality of the programs.

A delegation from Iowa, including staff from IAA have been invited to participate in a Midwest states conversation this fall to discuss criteria and requirements for school age and after school programs, how such programs link to quality rating systems, and quality improvement efforts in different states. It is anticipated, states will be able to walk away with ideas to increase access to after school programs.

IAA Welcomes Heidi Blomquist as Newest Board Member

As announced last month, the IAA recently welcomed new members to its Board of Directors. SPPG asked the board members to share some information about themselves and why they feel afterschool is so important, both personally and professionally. This month we will feature Ms. Heidi Bloomquist.



Heidi Blomquist, Executive Director of Boys and Girls Club of Central South-west Iowa

In every community, boys and girls are left to find their own recreation and companionship. An increasing number of children are at home with no adult care or supervision. Young people need to know that someone cares about them. Out of school programs such as the Boys & Girls Clubs offer that and more. Club programs and services promote and enhance the development of boys and girls by instilling a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging and influence.

Our mission at the Boys & Girls Clubs is to offer a safe place to learn and grow – all while having fun. “The Iowa After school Alliance champions quality before and after school opportunities through policy development and resource coordination.” By working collaboratively with other advocates of quality after-school and summer programs, our Club is further supported in our efforts to be The Positive Place For Kids.

Upcoming Professional Development, Events and Funding Opportunities

A. Save the Date: Iowa School Age Care Alliance Leadership Day and Annual Fall Conference

The Iowa School Age Care Alliance (ISACA) is pleased to announce that this year's Leadership Day and Annual Fall Conference will be held on September 26 & 27 at the University of Northern Iowa Cedar Falls. This year's theme is “School Age Care: A Foundation for the Future.” Please save this date on your calendar. ISACA anticipates it will be an amazing opportunity for school age care professionals!

Click here to access the Call For Proposal. Two presenters per proposal will receive free conference day registration. Presenters will be responsible for their own expenses (travel, copies, etc.). The deadline to submit proposal is July 1.

B. Check Out the Recently Launched Digital Library Afterschool Website

The project aims to bring more science and math enrichment into out-of-school time using resources from the Exploratorium's Digital Library. People visiting the site will learn about the various afterschool activities through digital videos, concept maps, links to other STEP resources, science explanations, educator tips and other related activities.

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/afterschool/activities/>

C. Join Every Child Matters in Iowa's “Step Up for Kids Day” on September 16, 2008

The national office of ECM is working to organize an event in all 50 states to draw public attention to issues affecting America's children such as poverty, health care, juvenile incarceration, child abuse and after-school programs. The event will kick-off nationwide at the National Press Club in Washington DC on September 16th. Supporters and advocates, volunteers and kids will gather on the steps of state capitols to highlight the needs of children and families.

To find more information on this event or on Every Child Matters, Iowa, please visit <http://www.everychildmatters.org/Iowa/index.html>.



D. The National Institute on Out-of-School Time is hosting its Annual Summer Seminars

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time is hosting its Annual Summer Seminars for Afterschool Program Professionals in Boston, MA on July 14-17. Seminars being offered include:

- **Advancing School, Afterschool, and Community Partnerships**
- **Quality Advisor Training**
- **Seminar for System Builders**
- **Afterschool Program Assessment System (APAS)**

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.niost.org/sumsem08.html>

E. Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) is accepting applications

The Global Youth Service Day (GYSD) is accepting applications from organizations to be a lead agency in planning and developing city, regional, or statewide service-learning projects. Lead Agencies will receive a \$2,000 planning grant sponsored by State Farm Companies Foundation and direct assistance and support from Youth Service America.

Deadline to submit grant proposal is July 11. For more information, please contact Andraéa LaVant, GYSD Manager at alavant@ysa.org.

F. Youth Development Partnership of United Way of Central Iowa Provides Free Training on Results-Based Accountability 101

The free training on Results-Based Accountability 101 will take place on July 10th from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Results-Based Accountability (RBA) is about getting from talk to action quickly. It provides a method of thinking and taking action together that is simple and common sense, that uses plain language, produces minimum paper and is useful.

RBA framework can be used to improve the quality of life in communities, cities, counties, states and nations, including everything from the well-being of children to the creation of a sustainable environment. It can help non-profit agencies and governments to improve the performance of their programs and make them more customer-friendly and effective. Book included.

[Please click here to register for the July 10 RBA Training](#)

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